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	Application No.	Applicant(s)	,
	09/678,210	RUST ET AL.	
Notice of Allowability	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Hung S Bui	2841	
The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS. This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.			
1. This communication is responsive to <u>amendment filed on 12/22/2004</u> .			
2. The allowed claim(s) is/are 1, 3-8, 11-20 (renumbered 1-17).			
3. The drawings filed on <u>26 September 2000</u> are accepted by the Examiner.			
 4. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority una) All b) Some* c) None of the: 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority do international Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)). * Certified copies not received: 	e been received. e been received in Application No		ion from the
Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application. THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.			
5. A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.			
6. CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.			
(a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached			
1) hereto or 2) to Paper No./Mail Date			
(b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date			
Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).			
7. DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the depo attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT			lote the
Attachment(s)			
1. Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	5. Notice of Informal P	atent Application (PTC)-152)
2. \square Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	6. Interview Summary		
3. Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/0 Paper No./Mail Date		Paper No./Mail Date <u>3302004</u> . 7. ⊠ Examiner's Amendment/Comment	
Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material	8. ☐ Examiner's Stateme 9. ☐ Other	ent of Reasons for Allo	wance

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with John S. Reid on 03/30/04.

The application has been amended as follows:

- cancel claim 2;
- in claim 1, line 5, delete "; and" and insert ---, wherein the first connector defines a first receiving opening configured to receive the securing member, the second connector defines a second receiving opening configured to receive the securing member, and therein when the connectors are coupled when the receiving openings are at least partially in alignment; and ---.
- 2. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Hung S Bui whose telephone number is (571) 272-2102. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 8:30AM-6:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David S Martin can be reached on (571) 272-2107. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

3/30/04

HB

RANDY W. GIBSON PRIMARY EXAMINER